

III. REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claim 23 is canceled, claims 2-4, 6, 10-13, 16, and 22 are amended, and new claim 24 is added. Claims 1-22, and 24 are presented for further consideration.

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 2-23 stand rejected under 35USC103(a) based on the reference Bilezikjian, U.S. Patent No. 5,735,716. Claims 2-23 stand rejected under 35USC112. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejection in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Applicant has again amended the claims of this application to recite the combination of features for which protection is sought in this application. Accordingly, it is submitted that the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35USC112 are fully met by the above amendments. These amendments are submitted after final rejection in order to place the claims in condition for allowance or in the alternative to place the claims in better condition for appeal. The Examiner is requested to exercise his discretion and enter these amendments.

Rejection under 35USC112

Applicant has carefully amended the claims to conform to the description in the specification. Reference numbers are provided in new claim 24 to direct the Examiner's attention to the elements of this invention, as shown in figure 1. Applicant suggests that a detailed review of figure 1 reveals all of the elements of the claims, connected relative to the axis of the contacting part and extending towards the contacting end.

Applicant submits that new claim 24 enables a person skilled in the art to understand the claimed structure. All of the elements of the claims are described using the language of the specification, in particular, at page 6, lines 6-30. All of the elements of claim 24 are fully identified in the specification with reference to figure 1.

Applicant acknowledges that the choice of the word "housing" in the translation was unfortunate, but, nevertheless, it is clear from the description and the figures that it refers to the cavity defining structure 11 that forms the female receiving part of the cylindrical span 12. This is easily understood by a person skilled in the art. Therefore, all of the elements of the claims are disclosed. Body 1 of the female portion of the connector is formed with a first cylindrical portion shown in figure 1 at reference numeral 13. A cylindrical span 12 extends from the first cylindrical portion 13 towards the contacting end of the female portion. Cylindrical portion 12 includes a cavity defined by housing 11. A contact clip 3 is shown as a separate element in figure 5 having tines 32 extending axially from clip annular portion 31. Tines 32 terminate in radially inward extending end tabs 33. In the embodiment of figure 1 the tines extend beyond the end of housing 11 and tabs 33 extend radially inward into opening 10. In the embodiment of figure 2, the contacting ends 33 of tines 32 extend through windows formed in cylindrical span 12.

The dependent claims are amended to depend from claim 24 and to conform to the adjusted language. Applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, are fully responsive to the rejection based on 35USC112, paragraph 1 and are in conformance therewith.

Discussion of the Cited Reference

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's reconsideration of the arguments below, which were previously submitted, but are now more clearly supported by the claims with reference to the description in the application.

The Examiner relies on the reference Bilezikian to support the rejection based on obviousness. The cited reference describes a connector having a tubular housing 24 defining a female receptacle 10 for engagement with a male connector pin 20. Electrical contact is established by means of a deformable sleeve 26 which collapses into contact with the pin 20 as the pin 20 is inserted in the receptacle 10. The sleeve 26 is constructed with multiple spring arms 38. A collar 28 forms an opening for insertion of pin 20 into receptacle 10 and locking tabs 34 engage pin 18 for retention in the connected position.

In accordance with new claim 24, the connector of this application has a housing 11 into which a male contacting part 2 may be inserted. At least a pair of tines 32 is attached to the clip annular portion 31. Clip annular portion 31 is secured over the cylindrical span 12 to which the cavity defining housing 11 is attached. The clip is formed with axially extending tines that, in turn, are constructed with radially inward extending contact ends 33. Ends 33 extend into the opening 10 of the housing 11 to engage the male contacting element 2. Engagement between contact ends 33 and male contact part 2 forms the electrical connection of the connector parts.

It is submitted that, in accordance with the above descriptions, the connector of the cited reference operates significantly different than the connector described in the claims of this application. The deformable sleeve of Bilezikjian is positioned within the receptacle, while clips of the subject application are outside the receptacle. Electrical contact is accomplished in Bilezikjian by the deformation of the internal sleeve, while electric contact in the subject connector is accomplished by the resilient engagement of the clip tines. There are no longitudinally extending contact tines formed on a clip annular portion in the connector of Bilezikjian.

The Issue of Obviousness

It is well settled that in order to establish a prima facie case for obviousness, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, without reference to the disclosure of this application.

Applicant submits that because of the above described deficiencies, the reference Bilezikjian does not support a prima-facie case of obviousness. The modification of the connector of Bilezikjian, in order to obtain the invention, as described in the claims submitted herein, would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art.

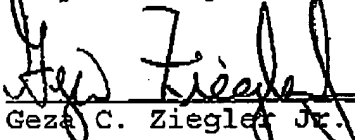
The above arguments apply equally to the rejected dependent claims.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly

novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,


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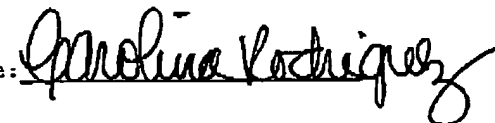
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